

Guardian Challenge

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News Briefs

Limit vehicles around venues

Parking is limited around Guardian Challenge activities.

Participants and spectators are asked to limit the number of vehicles at competition venues by carpooling.

Hangar off-limits

Now that the opening ceremony is complete, the hangar is off-limits.

Crews are working on the scoreposting banquet and need the area clear.

If you have a legitimate need to get in the hangar, please call Maj. Sam Ayars, 606-2490

Base beaches

Vandenberg's Surf, Wall and Minuteman Beaches are open Fridays through Mondays from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. for recreational access.

The boundaries are marked and citations will be issued to people who enter closed areas.

For beach access or status information, call the Beach Hotline at 606-6804.

Safety first

Safety is everyone's responsibility.

Throughout the competition and social events, look out for each other.

Always have a designated driver before anyone starts drinking.



Photo by Master Sgt. Robert Hargreaves

The Guardian Challenge Honor Guard from Patrick Air Force Base, Fla., post the colors at the GC opening ceremonies Monday.

Guardian Challenge blasts off

Airman 1st Class Mike Meares
GC public affairs

A competitive spirit burned at the opening ceremonies of Guardian Challenge 2002 like the sun breaking through the thick southern California fog that welcomed the competitors.

Members of Air Force Space Command showed up en masse to the 35th annual Guardian Challenge taking place here Monday through Thursday.

Guardian Challenge is the only space warfighter competition in the Air Force and major command competition to be held for more than three decades.

Originally nicknamed "Curtain Raiser" and then "Olympic Arena" under Strategic Air Command, the event dates back to 1967.

Renamed in 1994, Guardian Challenge pits the best-of-the-best space warfighters against each other, crowning the top space wing teams in the Air Force. This event

captures the essence of competition through rigorous evaluation and increases the overall capabilities of unit teams to perform their missions.

Guardian Challenge competitors arrive with their mascots who portray their wings.

Prior to the ceremony, the mascots riled up the crowd. The Minot Air Force Base Rough Rider's "Teddy Roosevelt" led the chants, while 91st Space Wing members slammed their "bully sticks." "Road Kill" from Malmstrom AFB, Mont., fired his gun into the air, as Buckley's black panther mascot "Buck Lee" clawed at other mascots.

"The Bombardier" from the 310th Space Group, Schriever AFB, Colo., held his bomb high while the air raid sirens blared. "The General" from Schriever's 50th SW did back flips on stage.

"The competitive spirit here is great," said Col. Dave Warner, 50th Communications Group commander. "If we

See Kickoff, Pg 8

Patrick honor guard captures GC win

By 2nd Lt. Eric Badger
GC public affairs

History was made by the 45th Space Wing Honor Guard team from Patrick Air Force Base, Fla., when they became the first team ever to win the Air Force Space Command Honor Guard Competition in April.

Along with that trophy came the privilege of being the honor guard for Guardian Challenge 2002.

The GC Honor Guard consists of 2nd Lt. Joshua Johnson, Master Sgt. Timothy Niles, Tech. Sgt. John Shelman, Tech. Sgt. Donald Zinkiewicz, Staff Sgt. Steven Reed, Senior Airman Timothy Pachter, Senior Airman Kelly Young, Airman 1st Class Michael Card, Airman 1st Class Tricia



Photo by Master Sgt. Robert Hargreaves

Patrick's honor guard team poses after arriving at Guardian Challenge Sunday.



Photo by Master Sgt. Hargreaves
The Patrick honor guard present the colors at the GC opening ceremonies Monday.

Yell and Airman Marco Barroso.

To get here, they competed against seven other bases in six categories at Peterson AFB, Colo. The other competing bases were Los Angeles, Malmstrom, Vandenberg, F.E. Warren, Schriever, Buckley and Peterson. Air Force Honor Guard members judged the teams in the following categories: posting and retiring of colors, flag folding, firing party, pallbearers, weapons cleaning, and standard funeral honors.

"When our team performed, everyone stood silent and watched," said Col. Michael Lehnertz, 45th Space Wing support group commander. "We were the team to beat."

After the competition was complete, the team mixed things up in Colorado Springs by expressing their flair for the unique. Teams were asked to perform a small introduction at the award ceremony to Gen. Lance Lord, AFSPC commander. While most performed formal cadences, Patrick's honor guard team acted out a routine from the early 1980's movie "Stripes" starring Bill Murray.

Individuals for the Patrick team were selected through a small contest held at Patrick. Six judges graded every honor guard member, and the top 10 members made the team. Teams practiced three times a week for three weeks. Two weeks prior to the

competition they practiced five times a week.

"I don't think anyone was surprised we took first," said Airman 1st Class Michael Card. "We perform an average of eight times a week."

Due to the large number of military veterans in the state of Florida, the team performs eight to 10 funerals a week, approximately 480 last year over a geographical area running from Central Florida to Miami.

Here at the competition, they will guard the GC trophies and present and retire colors.

Their first performance took place at Monday's opening ceremony from the base hangar as they presented and retired the colors.

Chefs light fire under competition

Field conditions focus for first event of GC

By Lynn Gonzales
GC public affairs

The first of three events in the Guardian Challenge chefs' competition kicked off Monday.

Chefs from four space wings competed in a safety event that required each team to disassemble, assemble and light an M-2 burner, a gasoline-operated burner used by the Department of Defense since the Korean War.

Each of the four teams consisted of two chefs from the 21st Space Wing at Peterson Air Force Base, Colo.; 90th SW at F.E. Warren AFB, Wyo.; 91st SW at Minot AFB, N.D.; and 341st SW at Malmstrom AFB, Mont.

"They trained real hard for this," said Master Sgt. Michael Ferricher, trainer for the 21st SW chefs. "They got up early, sometimes as early as four in the morning, and worked long hours to learn to properly utilize the equipment."

Following a short, multiple-choice test, competitors faced an assembled M-2 burner that needed to be broken down into its components. Once taken apart, those components are then re-assembled and fuel is pumped through it. Teams follow a procedural checklist throughout the event.

"When they're taking apart and putting together the burner, we're checking to make sure they follow certain safety procedures," said Master Sgt. John Fitzgerald, chefs' competition evaluator. "Taking it apart and putting it together was added to address the maintenance aspect, which is important out in the field."

Like most competitions, some setbacks are expected during the course of Guardian Challenge events, so the staff is prepared for them. When broken or damaged components



Photo by Staff Sgt Jennifer Wallis

Senior Airman Andrea Howard from the 21st Space Wing "Knights" of Peterson AFB, Colo., ensures the flame from the M-2 burner is operational during the chef's competition of Guardian Challenge on Monday. Guardian Challenge, the world's premier space and missile competition, is a four-day event hosted annually at Vandenberg AFB, Calif. It brings together Air Force Space Command's finest professionals in the spacelift, ICBM operations, communications, maintenance, helicopter operations, security forces and chef food preparation disciplines.

interfere with the regular course of the event, as happened to the 91st SW, timing of the event is paused while the components are exchanged, and the competition continues without the competitors being penalized for the delay.

The M-2 burner event is only the first event in the chefs' competition. Chefs from each team will face a food

preparation event and marksmanship event later in the week. These events consist of preparing a meal for 50 people and firing 30 rounds from an M-16 rifle using various positions and targets.

"The competition spirit gets you going and makes you want to do well," said Senior Airman Melissa Hudson, 341st SW competitor. "If we can do well here and take that spirit back with us to the base, it will boost morale there."



Photo by Amn Kara McCormick

"The Bombardiers" of the 310th Space Group get fired up at the opening ceremony of Guardian Challenge 2002 at Vandenberg Air Force Base, Calif. Guardian Challenge tests the wartime readiness of Air Force Space Command's finest professionals in the spacelift, ICBM operations, com-munications, maintenance, helicopter operations, security forces and chef food preparation disciplines.



Photo by Senior Airman Jonathan Pomeroy

Col. David Warner, 50th Communications Group commander, jumps out of his seat during his team's introduction at the GC opening ceremony Monday.



Photo by Staff Sgt Jennifer Wallis

"The General" from the Fightin' 50th, 1st Lt. Tim Zollars, clashes swords with Peterson's Knight "Iron Mike," Senior Master Sgt. David Lawrence, before the opening ceremony Monday.

Teams show spirit in volume at GC opening ceremony



Photo by Senior Airman Edward Braly

Vandenberg's GC team tries to rile up their opponents with signs and spirit on the way to the opening ceremony.



Photo by Staff Sgt. Pam Taubman
Malmstrom's "Road Kill," Master Sgt. Jeff Carr, makes some noise for the 341st Space Wing team.



Photo by Tech. Sgt. Richard Freeland

The Rough Riders rally with their "bully sticks," spurred on by Teddy Roosevelt, 1st Lt. Danny Matous, before the GC opening ceremony Monday.



Photo by Senior Airman Steve Chester

Tech. Sgt. Randall Glover, F.E. Warren "Wrangler" points out the "enemy" before the GC opening ceremony.



lege
The Aldridge Trophy

The Blanchard Trophy

The Schriever Trophy

Awards

Teams vie for symbols of pride, excellence

By Airman 1st Class Michael Deleo
GC public affairs

For the past 35 years, teams from Air Force Space Command have been vying for the "best-of -the-best" title while competing at Guardian Challenge space and missile competition.

Teams assemble from space and missile wings around the globe to compete for the three coveted trophies: the Blanchard, Aldridge and Schriever.

The Blanchard Trophy is named for former Air Force Vice Chief of Staff Lt. Gen. William Blanchard. It is presented to the best space intercontinental ballistic missile wing team.

According to GC officials, he was an early proponent for ICBMs and is considered an ICBM founding father.

Teams compete in a variety of events to include missile operations, missile maintenance, missile communications and ICBM codes. During these events, teams earn points that are combined and tallied at the end of the week with the trophy being presented at the scoreposting Thursday night.

The events place competitors in situations that test their poise and job knowledge. In the missile ops portion, teams troubleshoot weapon system

faults and respond to security situations. The missile maintenance events will be broken down into four separate competitions. In each portion, teams compete on specialized equipment.

Also included are the missile communications and ICBM codes teams. Communications evaluation consists of inspecting and repairing communications systems, while the codes teams take a 50-question test and perform functions in a wing code processing system.

Security forces and chef scores round out the criteria for the Blanchard.

On the space operations side of the house, teams look to bring home the coveted Aldridge Trophy, named after the 16th Secretary of the Air Force Edward "Pete" Aldridge Jr. He was responsible for the National Reconnaissance Office and the Air Force Space Program from 1986 to 1988.

To win the Aldridge trophy, wing teams combine scores in space operations, space communications and security forces.

The space events stretch the competitor's mettle to the final frontier. In the space ops portion of the competition, teams test their skills in space surveillance, satellite control and

space warning. The space communications teams perform computer operation control specialties and reroute space circuits.

The battles continue for control over the spacelift Schriever Trophy, named after Lt. Gen. Bernard Schriever, the former commander of the western development division.

According to Guardian Challenge officials, Schriever was a driving force in the development of early ICBMs from which U. S. space boosters are derived.

The two teams will battle in the expertise of spacelift and spacelift maintenance. In the spacelift portion, ops crewmembers will test their reaction time to environmental emergencies, launch safety and equipment malfunctions; on the maintenance side, teams will perform computer operation control specialties and reroute space circuits.

Security forces scores are also added to the total for the win.

During the opening ceremony, last year's winning teams relinquished the trophies back to Maj. Gen. Jerry Perryman, Guardian Challenge competition judge.

"I have them now," Perryman told the teams, "it's your job to earn them back."

GPO make GC happen

Master Sgt. Lloyd Conley

GC public affairs

Guardian Challenge 2002, Air Force Space Command's annual space and missile competition, takes place at Vandenberg Air Force Base this week amid much fanfare and celebration.

The 35th annual event spotlighting the best-of-the-best in space command lasts only a week, but the coordination, preparation and planning for this year's event began almost a year ago, said Capt. Janice Hance, chief of the guardian programs office.

Hance and her staff are responsible for coordinating the entire behind the scene actions needed to make the annual competition a success.

"Guardian Challenge gives true meaning to the term 'Team Vandenberg,'" said Lt. Col. David Christensen, 30th Operations Support Squadron commander.

The Vandenberg Guardian Programs Office staff is the focal point for coordinating with base and civilian agencies to help GC 2002 get off the ground with as few problems as possible.

By the time Guardian Challenge starts, the GPO staff of less than 20 have enlisted the aid of hundreds of people on and off base to stage AFSPC's premier event.

Staff Sgt. Dave Najera, also known as "Super Dave" by his teammates, primarily serves in an administrative capacity, but his responsibilities include finance, contracts and purchasing necessary supplies for the GPO.

Senior Airman Donna Vargas, 30th Communications Squadron, performs a different set of administrative duties. She puts together visitor and participant information packages. She also helps with baggage and tag processing and staff and escort badges. Airman Basic Alena Hefner, 30th Operations Support Squadron, one of the newest members to the Air Force and the team, pitches in to help Najera and Vargas with

anything else that might call for an administrative touch.

Protocol affairs are important for GC 2002, and that's Capt. Mike Schaffer's, 30th Range Squadron, forte.

With the help of a team of escots, Schaffer directs and coordinates the logistics for all the distinguished visitors and special DV events.

"We have had more than 50 people

"None of it would be possible without Team Vandenberg working in unison to make Guardian Challenge possible."

Capt. Janice Hance

guardian programs office chief

volunteer as escorts," said 1st Lt. Erik Fonseca, 30th OSS. Escorts range from the rank of airman first class to major.

"They are tasked with making sure the distinguished guests have everything they need like lodging and transportation," Fonseca said. They also make sure that the person they're responsible for arrives at scheduled events on time.

That takes communication, as does coordinating all the competition.

Enter 2nd Lt. Bryan Carlson, 30th CS, who lends his expertise to the team. The "Cable Guy," as Carlson is affectionately called by his program teammates, has the responsibility to coordinate and initiate all of the headquarters, numbered air force and guardian challenge communications support.

"This includes getting radios for team members, setting up audio and video for events like the 'Curtain Raiser' block party and the

scoreposting banquet in the hangar," said Carlson.

If people weren't able to get where they needed to go for the events, GC 2002 wouldn't happen. That's where Master Sgt. Mark Callahan, 30th Transportation Squadron, comes to the rescue. He coordinates all the base transportation requirements.

By far, the most labor-intensive project is preparing the hangar for the scoreposting banquet, said Capt. Sam Ayars, 30th OSS and hangar boss.

"It's like preparing the place for a large concert, and we're, the hangar crew, the roadies," Ayars said.

Ayars and his band of volunteers spend hours on end doing construction, electrical work and plumbing to get the hangar ready for the show.

Ayars' assistant, 1st Lt. Dominick Young, 30th OSS, coordinates 30th Civil Engineer Squadron and audio visual support for the hangar.

"We want to make the hangar a place where we can come and celebrate being the best of the best," Ayars said.

Some organizations offering their time and assistance are the local Non-Commissioned Officers Association, the Vandenberg Top 3 Association, Health and Wellness Center and the Santa Maria Elks Club.

The other GPO staff members are Capt. Steve Long, an Individual Mobilization Augmentee at U.S. Strategic Command; Dayna Castro, 30th OSS, protocol; 2nd Lts. Kenneth Johnston and Lence Mortensen, 381st Training Group; Capt. Patrick Maloney, 30th Range Squadron, coordinator for arrivals and departures of distinguished visitors; and 2nd Lts. Tracie Ryan and Cary Brunger, 381st TRG, competition venues and graphics.

"The GPO staff is only the tip of the spear," added Hance. "None of it would be possible without Team Vandenberg working in unison to make Guardian Challenge possible."



Photo by Staff Sgt. Lee Osberry

Behind the Scenes

Staff Sgt. Donna Vargas

CALL SIGN: "ADMIN 2"

UNIT: 30th Communications Squadron

YEARS IN SERVICE: Celebrating 5 years of service today

HOMETOWN: Lompoc, Calif.

GC ROLE: Staff Sgt. Donna Vargas has been working with the Guardian Programs Office since January. As part of the administration staff, she helps keep things flowing smoothly, said Capt. Mike Burk, Guardian Challenge project lead for AFSPC. Among other things, she was responsible for the assembly and distribution of the staff badges and visitor information packages.

Kickoff

Continued from Page 1

could grab this [enthusiasm], bottle it up and take it back to the base, we would be good for the rest of the year."

Adding to the ambiance, the hangar was transformed into a spectacle of lights and sound. Theater-sized screens flanked the stage, walls covered with parachutes and camouflage netting, as they displayed images of competitors from past years. The hangar was transformed into a world stage: The United States' long-standing allies Australia, Canada and United Kingdom, were honored in the beginning of the ceremony as the Lompoc Pops Orchestra performed their national anthems.

Lompoc Pops Orchestra is a local 34-member orchestra led by conductor Rudolfo Fernandez from Lompoc, Calif.

"It's an honor performing for the Air Force at Guardian Challenge," said Jerry Scanlon, president of Lompoc Pops Orchestra.

"This is a great opportunity to display to the world what great men and women we have in this command," said Lt. Gen. Bob Hinson, AFSPC vice commander. "We have nearly 40,000 Air Force Space Command people in 13 different countries and in 14 different time zones. This week we will show the rest of the world how good we really are."

This year's competition judge is Maj. Gen. Jerry Perryman, former commander of the 91st Missile Wing, 21st Space Wing and 14th Air Force. He challenged teams to capture back the trophies from him.

Awards are presented to the best space wing team in each mission area on Thursday. The Blanchard Trophy is presented to the best space intercontinental ballistic missile wing team.

The best space operations wing is awarded the Aldridge Trophy while the best space launch wing team receives the Schriever Trophy.

Top Gun awards are given to the best missile operations crew, best space operations crew (selected from among the best space warning, space surveillance and satellite operations crews), and best spacelift operations crew. Additionally, functional area awards are presented to the best maintenance, security police, communications, missile code controller, chef and helicopter elements.

Guardian Challenge 2002

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